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Fourth Meeting of the ECA Joint
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on Human Settlements and Environment

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PROGRESS REPORT ON 1986-1987 ENVIRONMENT IN AFRICA PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES SINCE THE LAST MEETING, INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF ENVIRONMENT IN AFRICA WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1988-1989 BIENNIUM

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Third meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment (referred to below as the Joint Committee) was held at ECA, Addis Ababa from 22-26 July 1985. That meeting reviewed the implementation of the ECA Environment in Africa Work Programme for the 1984 1985 biennium as carried out by the three-man professional staff in the Environment Co-ordination Section of Social Development Environment and Human Settlements Division. Because of the impact of the prolonged drought 1968-84 and its devastating effect coupled with that of desertification on the economy and on food production on more than two-thirds of the African countries the ECA has put a very high priority on these twin problems of environmental degradation

2. In the light of the above which has contributed significantly to the current economic and social crisis in Africa the third meeting of the Joint Committee deliberated at length on the outcome of the Scientific Round Table on the Climatic situation and drought in Africa as well as on environmental manpower development in the Africa region. Two main outcomes of the Scientific Round Table were the adoption of a Regional Plan of Action to Combat the Impacts of Drought in Africa 1/ by ECA resolution 499 (XIX) and the call for a feasibility study to establish an advanced centre for the applications of meteorology to development as indicated in ECA resolution 528 (XIX) both of May 1984.

3. Besides these two major environmental concerns the third meeting of the Joint Committee also discussed the incorporation of environmental components into the training programmes of ECA-sponsored institutions, the establishment and/or improvement of national standards for the protection of the African environment, review of national environmental legislation and technical cooperation for the implementation of conventions and protocols on the environment as well as the work programme for 1986-1987. The Report of the third meeting of the Joint Committee to the ECA Conference of Ministers is available to this meeting (E/ECA/CM.12/9).

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS RESULTING FROM THE THIRD MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

4. Concerning ECA resolution 528 (XIX) a progress report on the establishment of an advanced African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD) (document E/ECA/ENV/23) was considered by the third meeting of the Joint Committee. The report dealt with the inter-agency report on the feasibility study and the accompanying draft project document which had been discussed at the eleventh meeting

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1/ Now published in ECA RURAL PROGRESS VOL. V No.2 pages 3-14 1986

of the ECA Conference of Ministers in April 1985. The Conference of Ministers had adopted its resolution 540 (XX) by deciding to establish the Centre ACMAD and requesting ECA and WMO "to conduct any necessary additional studies and take appropriate measures to ensure the availability of meteorological data and information and the means of exchange among member States via the WMO regional telecommunications system, which is the primary mechanism by which ACMAD will collect meteorological data and distribute its products".

5. The report to the Joint Committee also dealt with an inter-agency consultations with the Government of Kenya who was the only potential host country at the time in July 1985. After discussion of the above stated report the Joint Committee recommended that the ACMAD governing body be composed of representatives from the five subregions(MULPOCs) of Africa. WMO also suggested that its regional representatives for Africa who are mostly Directors of national meteorological services should consider the technical details of the project document for ACMAD at their Second Technical Conference on the Management of Meteorological Services in Africa in Bujumbura, Burundi in November 1985.

6. The Report of the Third Meeting of the Joint Committee (document E/ECA/CM.12/9) as well as a Progress Report on the establishment of the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD) (document E/ECA/CM.12/14) were discussed at the twelfth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers at Yaounde, Cameroon in April 1986. As a result the Conference adopted its resolution 585 (XXI) for ECA to undertake consultations with potential host countries with regard to underwriting the capital and other costs of establishing the centre and with WMO to prepare a draft constitution of the Centre and submit it through this Joint Committee Meeting to the thirteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers in April 1987, and to seek financial support from UNDP, UNSO, World Bank, ADB, bilateral and multilateral sources to establish the Centre. The ECA has contacted both Kenya and Egypt as the only two countries who have requested to host the Centre. Their responses are being awaited.

7. Also, in implementing the resolution 585 (XXI), an ECA/WMO Inter-agency Expert Consultations on Establishing the Centre (ACMAD) was held at the WMO Regional Office for Africa in Bujumbura, Burundi, 8-10 October 1986 with sub-regional representatives of Directors of national meteorological services under the chairmanship of the President of WMO Regional Association I (Africa) who is the Director of Meteorological Services for Ethiopia. The report of that expert group meeting with a draft constitution for the Centre ACMAD is presented for discussion at this Joint Committee meeting as document E/ECA/ENV/34 with its annex.

8. The other resolution resulting from discussions on the Report of the Third meeting of the Joint Committee at the twelfth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers was 578 (XXI) on "Development of environmental capabilities in Africa". This resolution is in three parts, namely:

(a) Part I - "Development of national environmental standards" which resulted from the Report (E/ECA/ENV/20) of the Expert Group Meeting

on the subject organized by ECA and the African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO). The resolution recommended that National Standards Bodies (NSB) or their equivalents should develop environmental standards along with other standards in the country and that emphasis should be put on social standards (codes of conduct) in relation to safe drinking water supply, human waste disposal, agro-chemical and industrial waste disposal, drought and desertification control, in order to halt environmental degradation at this stage of development in Africa. A Manual (E/ECA/ENV/17) on the subject is now available as a technical publication for distribution to and follow-up action by member States.

(b) Part II - "Implementation of conventions and protocols on the environment". This resulted from the Joint Committee s discussions on document E/ECA/ENV/21 on the need for the ECA and the OAU to promote technical cooperation among and between member States in this area. It was noted that in the area of international agreements on the environment only 20 to 60 per cent of African countries have ratified up to 30 per cent of the 27 global conventions and protocols affecting the protection of the African environment. Hence the resolution calls for the ECA, OAU and UNEP to undertake a study to identify the difficulties being experienced by African countries and to provide technical assistance to them to increase their participation in the implementation of such treaties.

(c) Part III - " Institutionalization of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN)". This matter was not discussed at the last Joint Committee meeting in July 1985 but it was the outcome of a Report (E/ECA/CM.12/27) on the first meeting of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment which was held in Cairo, Egypt in December 1985 under the auspices of UNEP, ECA and the OAU and discussed at the twelfth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers as stated above. The resolution endorsed the institutionalization of the Conference in order to implement the Cairo Programme of Action for African Cooperation on Environment and Eco-Development which the Conference formulated and adopted. The resolution also decided that this Joint Committee should serve as the technical working group of African experts to the AMCEN Conference. A working document E/ECA/ENV/33 is presented to this Joint Committee meeting on the implementation of the Cairo Programme.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THIS FOURTH MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

9. During this fourth meeting of the Joint Committee, the experts will examine reports on six areas of environmental concern in the Africa region as indicated in the Agenda namely: (i) development of environmental capabilities to combat desertification and the impacts of drought (E/ECA/ENV/31) (ii) prevention of encroachment on arable lands (E/ECA/ENV/24/Rev.1), (iii) developing national environmental standards (E/ECA/ENV/17), (iv) development of environmental training for marine technicians (E/ECA/ENV/32), (v) implementation of the Cairo Programme

of Action (E/ECA/ENV/33) and (vi) report on inter-agency expert consultations on establishing the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD) (E/ECA/ENV/34).

10. Already, in the previous section dealing with the implementation of resolutions and recommendations resulting from the Third meeting of the Joint Committee in July 1985, background summaries of activities have been given for three of the above topics, namely: establishment of the Centre ACMAD the Cairo Programme of Action, and development of national environmental standards. Hence similar progress report will be given in this section as background for the remaining three topics above, namely combating desertification and the impacts of drought prevention of encroachment on arable lands and environmental training in general.

11. On combating desertification and the impacts of drought since the last meeting in July 1985, the ECA has been mainly concerned with putting into practical measures the recommendations of the Regional Plan of Action to Combat the Impacts of Drought (1984) drawn up at the Scientific Round Table mentioned earlier and those in the United Nations Plan of Action to Combat Desertification (1977). Using these Plans of Action, the Environment Section worked with the ECA/OAU Steering Committee in 1985 to prepare a programme for the rehabilitation of agriculture and food production through the application of medium- to long-term measures to combat desertification and the impacts of drought in Africa within the context of the other factors aggravating the current social and economic crisis in the continent.

12. The ECA/OAU exercise lead to the development of Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) 1986-1990 which was adopted at the 21st session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU in July 1985. The Environment Section also assisted in organizing an ECA/OAU/UNSO meeting of subregional organizations and specialized institutions in Africa for drought and desertification control in March 1986 for inputs to the First Extraordinary Meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers also held at ECA Addis Ababa 28-29 March 1986 followed by the Fifteenth Extraordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers on 30 31 March 1986, both on the social and economic crisis in Africa. These meetings produced Africa's submission, as document E/ECA/ECM.1/1 or ECM/2XV in two volumes with addenda, to the Thirteenth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly held in New York on 27-31 May 1986. The General Assembly then adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990.

13. The UN Programme of Action incorporates the APPER as Africa's commitment to launch collective self-reliant programmes at the national and regional levels for the rehabilitation of its economy and to break away from the clutches of poverty and underdevelopment, with the support of the international community. Hence the document E/ECA/ENV/31 prepared for discussion at this fourth meeting of the Joint Committee indicates the national efforts of African countries and the subregional and regional assistance being provided by various international organizations to strengthen environmental capabilities to implement the APPER with particular reference to drought and desertification control.

14. The problem of prevention of encroachment on arable lands in Africa as reflected in document E/ECA/ENV/24/Rev.1 is the result of an Expert Group meeting on the subject with member States organized by the ECA Environment Section with inter-agency cooperation (FAO, UNEP, UNESCO) in September 1985. The problem has been reviewed from two perspectives, namely: firstly the encroachment on arable lands due to urbanization and its related economic and physical development, and secondly the impacts of environmental degradation on soil deterioration and erosion, resulting in loss of arable lands.

15. Finally, in the area of environmental training the ECA Environment Section has been engaged in the implementation of an ECA/UNEP project on the "Incorporation of environmental components into the training programmes of ECA-sponsored subregional and regional institutions" under a UNEP FUND project FP/3102 84-02 (2367). The implementation of the project started in early 1985 with an ECA mission to about 11 ECA-sponsored institutions who had expressed an interest in the project to collect materials on the various training courses offerred, such as the curriculum timetable schedule and the number of participants trained annually. The mission led to the development of a draft "Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum on Environmental Management" which was discussed at an ECA/UNEP/ADB Training Workshop held at the African Development Bank (ADB), Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire in November 1985. Lecturers from 11 ECA-sponsored institutions participated at the training of trainers workshop where they developed the concepts, methodology and contents for the draft core curriculum.

16. The final version of the Core Curriculum which is being prepared by ECA for publication comprises of five distinct units, namely:

UNIT I - Environmental Management for Development

UNIT II - Environmental Assessment and Standardization

UNIT III - Drought and Desertification Control: social, economic and environmental implications

UNIT IV - Environmental Health and Sanitation

UNIT V - Environmental Aspects of Population Trends and Resources Use.

No report is being presented to this Joint Committee as yet, as the implementation of the project is still incomplete. Last December 1986, another training of trainers workshop by ECA/UNEP/ESAMI was held at UNEP, Nairobi for the incorporation of environmental components into the training courses of the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI) located at Arusha, Tanzania. ESAMI trains about 1500 government planners, managers and others annually for the subregion so the multiplier effect of the two workshops should be very encouraging in terms of creating environmental consciousness in planners, decision-makers and administrators involved on development issues.

17. Under this same area of environmental training, this Joint Committee meeting is requested to discuss document E/ECA/ENV/32 on the Development of environmental training for technicians in marine pollution, coastal erosion and the depletion of marine resources in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The document is the result of a study of the problem carried out by an ECA consultant some time ago followed by an in-house revision of the report. The Joint Committee of experts may wish to recommend follow-up action such as a training workshop for manpower development of environmental technicians on marine affairs preferably to be carried through joint activities within the United Nations system.

IV. PLANNING FUTURE ACTIVITIES: ECA ENVIRONMENT IN AFRICA WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE 1988-1989 BIENNIUM

18. The mandate of this Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment in ECA resolution 408 (XVI) recommends that this Joint Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Commission, reviews the future ECA Environment in Africa Work Programme and examines the performance report of the current work programme. The third meeting of the Joint Committee had reviewed the current Environment in Africa Work Programme for the 1986-1987 biennium presented in document E/ECA/ENV/22, the implementation of which is reflected in the activities being discussed under the agenda items of this fourth meeting of the Joint Committee.

19. The proposed Environment in Africa work programme for 1988-1989 biennium with ten outputs is given below:

Environment in Africa Work Programme for 1988-1989

Subprogramme 1: Development of Environmental Capabilities including Conservation of Resources and Pollution Control

(a) General objectives of the secretariat: To assist member States in the formulation of environmental policies, in the establishment of institutions, including legislative bodies, and in the design and organization of manpower training with technological support, environmental education for the public, and an information system for controlling environmental problems, and to promote the development and management of land-based, coastal and marine natural resource the use of non-conventional sources of energy, pollution control in the development process and measures to combat the growing encroachment of deserts on arable land.

(b) Resource requirements	Percentage of programme total
Regular budget	67
Extrabudgetary	33

(c) Reference: Medium-term Plan for the period 1984-1989 (A/40/6) paras.12.51 - 12.56.

(d) Programme elements:

Programme element 1.1: Technical cooperation for developing national environmental capabilities

Final outputs:

(i) Report to the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment on progress in the development of suitable national measures to combat desertification and the impact of drought on the economies of member States. (First quarter 1989)

1.2 Co-ordination of environmental activities within the Commission, with UNEP and with other international organizations working on environmental problems in Africa

Final outputs:

(i) Substantive servicing of the fifth meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment (First quarter 1989).

1.3 Environmental assessment and management relating to the impacts of development on natural resources utilization including pollution control and waste disposal

Final outputs:

(i) Report to the Council of Ministers of (a) the Niamey-based MULPOC and (b) the Lusaka-based MULPOC on measures to mitigate environmental health and disease problems relating to drought and desertification. (a) first quarter 1988 and (b) first quarter, 1989).

(ii) Report to the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment on modalities for incorporating the Cairo Programme of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment into on-going national environment programme (first quarter, 1989).

(iii) Report to the ECA Conference of Ministers on the management of environmental degradation, particularly drought and desertification aspects in the implementation of the African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (second quarter, 1989).

(iv) Report to the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment on the ratification and accession to international and regional environmental agreements with particular emphasis on conservation of tropical forests, and their implementation by member States (first quarter 1989).

(v) Technical publication: Environmental problems of underground water resources development in drought-prone countries in Africa, for agriculturists and environmental managers (third quarter, 1988).

(vi) Technical publication: Pollution control and waste disposal problems in selected African countries: case studies for the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, for industrial planners and environmental managers 1980 1990 (fourth quarter, 1989).

1.4 Development of manpower capabilities and creation of environmental training and education activities

Final outputs:

(i) Lectures delivered to participants from member States attending training courses of ECA-sponsored subregional and regional institutions on the environmental aspects of development issues in Africa (two lectures in 1988 and two in 1989).

(ii) Servicing of a study tour for representatives of member States on measures taken to combat desertification in four North African MULPOC countries with a view to examining successes and failures (third quarter 1989).